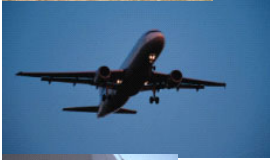
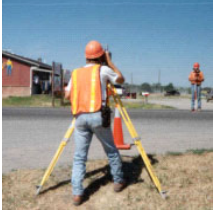


PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT



TRANPLAN 21 – 2002 UPDATE

STATE OF MONTANA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DEVELOPED BY DYE MANAGEMENT GROUP, INC.

Montana Department of Transportation
TranPlan 21 - 2002 Update

Public Involvement Plan



This document is the public involvement plan for the 2002 update to *TranPlan 21*. The public involvement plan is organized into the following sections:

- Public involvement objectives.
- Public involvement plan summary.
- *TranPlan 21* decision-making process and update schedule.

I. Public Involvement Objectives

Public involvement is an integral part of updating *TranPlan 21*. The public involvement plan is based on the following objectives:

- Ensuring Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) establishes a customer-driven plan.
- Providing inclusive cost-effective techniques.
- Conducting structured involvement at three key decision points in the plan:
 - Early on to identify plan update issues.
 - Prior to major plan decisions to obtain customer and partner feedback on alternative policy goals and actions.
 - When a draft plan update is prepared to provide opportunity for fine-tuning the plan.
- Structuring public involvement to provide opportunities for historically underrepresented groups to provide input to the process.
- Ensuring ongoing communication with MDT partners and customers regarding plan progress and involvement opportunities. These include:
 - Local elected officials and staff.
 - Metropolitan planning organizations.
 - Tribal governments.

- Stakeholder organizations.
- Montana citizens.

II. Public Involvement Plan Summary

The following exhibit summarizes the public involvement plan, what purpose their involvement serves, and how the involvement will be solicited.

Exhibit II-1: Summary of Public Involvement

When	Purpose	Mechanisms
Stage I – after preliminary definition and identification of issues and trends, before developing policy goals, actions, and plan alternatives.	Inform public of the update process, obtain input on identifying and refining issues and concerns, and build support for the plan and its implementation through early public participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Newsletter inserts and targeted mail in surveys.• Open houses and stakeholder focus groups in each MDT district.• Tribal government meetings.• Meetings with local government associations.• Telephone survey (completed).• E-mail surveys.• Toll-free phone number.• Speakers' bureau.
Stage II – after developing alternatives for policy goals, actions, and plan alternatives, before drafting plan update.	Obtain input on alternative policy goals and actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Newsletter inserts and targeted mail-in survey.• Open houses and stakeholder focus groups.• Tribal government meetings.• Meetings with local government associations.• E-mail surveys and Web site.

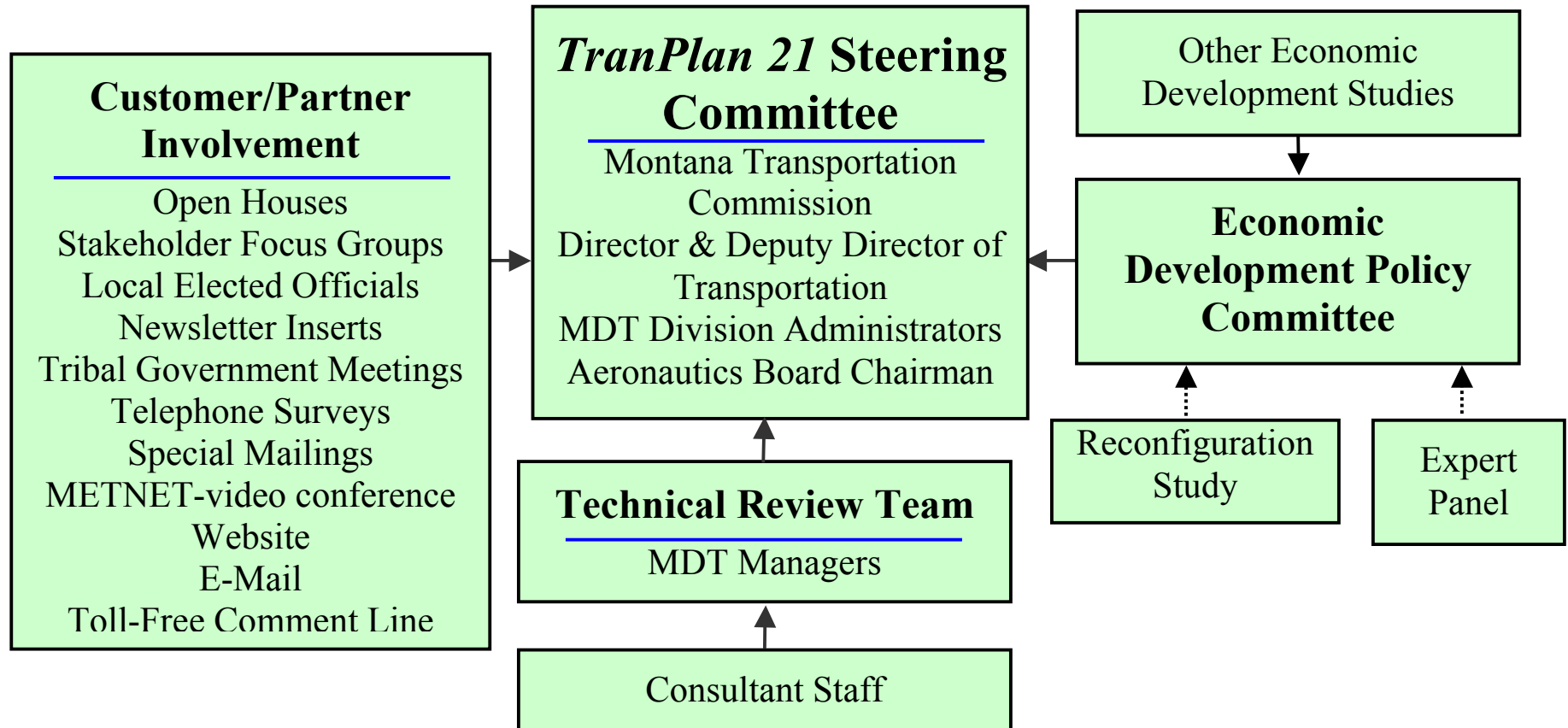
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Toll-free phone number.• Speaker's bureau.
Stage III – after drafting plan update, before finalizing and adopting plan.	Provide last opportunity to comment on the draft plan, meet federal public review requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disseminate draft plan to public libraries.• Provide summary to public through U.S. Mail on request.• E-mail, and MDT Web site.• Toll-free phone number.

III. *TranPlan 21* Decision-making Process and Update Schedule

A. Decision-making Process

The plan process is depicted in Exhibit III-1. Decision-making will take place as follows:

Exhibit III-1: Plan Process



TranPlan21 Steering Committee. This committee will adopt recommended policies and actions, and, later, the updated plan.

Economic Development Policy Committee. This committee, representing policy makers and private industry, will provide recommendations to the steering committee to the *TranPlan 21* steering committee.

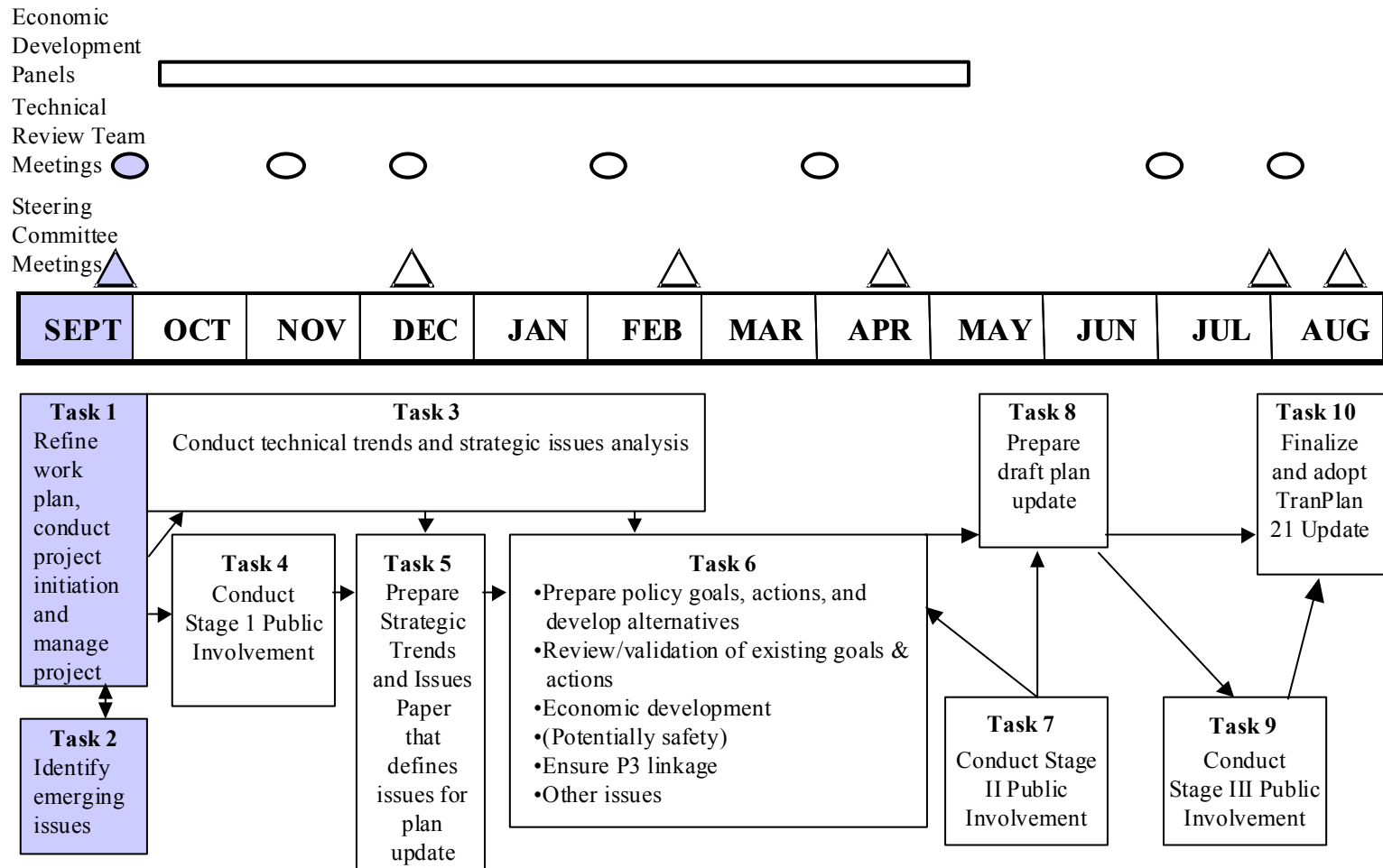
Customer, partner, and stakeholder input. Through this public involvement plan, MDT's customers, partners, and transportation stakeholders will provide input into the decision-making process.

Technical review team. An MDT technical review team will guide the day-to-day work for the plan. A consultant staff supports this team.

B. Plan Schedule and Work Steps

Exhibit III-2 provides an overview of the work steps and schedule for the plan update.

Exhibit III-2: Work Steps and Schedule



C. Stage I Public Involvement

The purpose of the Stage I Public Involvement is to:

- Share the plan update process and its objectives with the public and transportation stakeholders.
- Obtain input on the issues to be addressed by the plan.
- Build support for the plan and its implementation through early public participation.

The following public involvement mechanisms will be used.

1. Stakeholder and Partner – Communications and Survey

a. Newsletter inserts with feedback forms and targeted mail-in surveys

A special edition of the Transportation Plan newsletter and inserts for other newsletters will be developed. The inserts and targeted mail-in surveys will introduce the plan update process, summarize the public involvement process, list the participation opportunities, and include a feedback form to identify additional plan update issues.

Organizations that comprise and work with low-income, Native American, Hispanic, and other historically underrepresented groups will be identified. Their help will be solicited in providing mailing lists for postage paid mail-in survey forms.

b. *TranPlan 21* online community

A MDT online community will be established as a link from the MDT Web site. As the plan update progresses, we will build an e-mail listing of interested individuals and stakeholders. Their input will be solicited at the key plan decision points. Where local government, stakeholder, and other organizations are willing to provide e-mail listings, we will use these to build an e-mail distribution list that we will survey for input as part of Stage I Public Involvement.

c. Presentations to Government Associations

Presentations will be made to the Montana Association of Counties and the League of Citizens and Towns.

d. Presentations to Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)

Presentations will be made to the technical advisory committees (TACs) and the policy coordinating committees (PCCs) of Montana MPOs.

e. “Piggyback” presentations to stakeholder organizations

Presentations will be made to stakeholder organizations that piggyback on their planned meetings. The purpose of these presentations will be to introduce the *TranPlan 21* update, communicate involvement opportunities, and to gather further input.

2. Public Opinion Surveys

Public opinion surveys provide a scientific mechanism for obtaining input regarding Montana citizens’ issues and transportation values. This will ensure broad input.

a. MDT’s biennial surveys

The results from MDT’s biennial surveys of transportation users and stakeholders will be used to provide public input into the issue identification.

b. Other surveys

Other surveys, such as the MDT public opinion survey of highway maintenance will be used.

3. Stakeholder Focus Groups and Public Open Houses

The number of focus groups and open houses is constrained by MDT’s desire to be cost-effective in the use of planning resources. By conducting meetings in five (5) locations, MDT does not cover all the State; however, the meetings will provide perspective on issues identified in a good number of Montana’s communities. Anyone who is unable to attend the meetings,

and who wants to provide input, will be able to do so through a number of other public involvement opportunities.

a. Open houses

We will conduct one open house in each MDT district. They will be held in the following cities: Butte, Great Falls, Missoula, Miles City, and Billings. Open houses will take place between 5:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. to allow for late afternoon and evening attendance. The public most interested in participating will be targeted through existing MDT communication channels, including the MDT Web site, newspapers and radio press releases, and public information on community radio.

The open house format will consist of a brief presentation, supplemented with visual aids that will introduce the plan update process. After the presentation, the presenter will ask participants a series of questions to solicit input.

b. Partner and Stakeholder Focus Groups

The focus groups will be held in the afternoon and in the same community where the open houses are conducted. We will invite prospective participants from stakeholder and partner organizations. These will include local elected officials, MPOs, community groups, and local chambers of commerce.

Participants will be sent a letter of invitation and receive a follow-up telephone call. The invitation letter will explain the purpose of the focus group and the value of their participation. We will include a list of the issues or proposals that will be covered in the focus group.

Participants will be guided through a series of structured questions and a facilitated discussion to provide input. This discussion will be structured to obtain input on plan update issues as well as to identify other areas of importance to the participants.

D. Stage II Public Involvement

The purpose of this stage of public involvement is to obtain input regarding alternative policy goals and actions. The results of this input will be provided to the Steering Committee when they consider plan actions. The same public involvement mechanisms used in Stage I will be available, with some modification, for Stage II:

- Newsletter insert and mail-in survey.
- Five (5) public open houses in different Montana communities.
- Afternoon stakeholder meetings on the same days and in the same locations as the open houses.
- *TranPlan 21* online community and e-mail survey. The survey will be sent to: all those who have participated in prior public involvement activities, as well as e-mail and mailing lists established through the prior tasks.

E. Stage III Public Involvement

The draft plan update will be made available at public libraries, by e-mail, on the MDT Web site, and by U.S. Mail. Stage III provides the public with a final opportunity to comment on draft policy goals and actions. The comment period will meet or exceed the federally required 45-day minimum.

F. Tribal Government Involvement

In recognition of the sovereignty of individual tribes, the plan makes special provisions for obtaining input from the seven federally recognized tribal governments in Montana. The involvement will include providing each tribal government the opportunity to meet and provide input on the plan. Meetings will include a briefing on the plan update process and provide an opportunity for input and comment on plan direction. In addition, tribal government transportation planners will be contacted to further identify issues and to ensure coordination with the planning they are involved in.

G. Ongoing Communications and Input Opportunities

MDT will use a number of mechanisms that will provide ongoing opportunities for input and for communicating with the public and

transportation stakeholders. The communications will provide information on the plan update and explain the opportunities for input.

The following communication mechanisms will be used:

- Providing communications information to print and broadcast media.
- *TranPlan 21* newsletter.
- MDT Web site.
- Inserts in transportation stakeholder mailing lists.
- Presentations to stakeholder and partner organizations.
- Toll-free phone number.

H. Internal MDT Involvement

An important objective for the plan is to communicate to MDT employees regarding the plan's purpose, update steps, and its role. This will be accomplished by:

- Providing plan update information for MDT's Intranet.
- Meeting with MDT district employees prior to open houses.
- Providing briefings to MDT line managers and employees at key points.
- Providing briefings that piggyback on planned divisional meetings and training activities.